

THE Harbinger of Light.

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DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM, AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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CONTENTS.

	Page.
Mr. Crookes' Experiments.....	599-600
Communication.....	600
Impressional Writing.....	600
Poetry.—"An antidote for superstition".....	600-1
Physical Manifestations at Sandhurst.....	601-4
A Sunday Picnic.....	604-6
Spirit Hair.....	605-8
An essay on Life, its Origin and Objects.....	606-9
Working for the Truth.....	608-5
Mr. Charles H. Foster.....	609-10
A Natural Clairvoyant.....	610
Incidents of Impression Mediumship.....	610-11
Viscount Amberley on Spiritualism.....	612
The "Harbinger".....	612
The Spiritualistic and Freethought Propagandist Society.....	612
True Marriage.....	612

It is now nearly three years since Mr. W. Crookes, F.R.S., startled the scientific world by publishing in the "Quarterly Journal of Science" the result of some experiments in spiritual phenomena which at that time he was pleased to call psychic force. The publication of these experiments even under this quasi scientific cognomen, gave great umbrage to his fellow savans, and especially to the Royal Society, who refused him permission to read a paper on the subject before them. Mr. Crookes endeavored to fortify his position by publishing some further experiments through the mediumship of Mr. Home and others, by which he demonstrated the existence and action of an intelligent force totally independent of the medium or any person present, but the scientific world had made up their minds on the subject and were obdurate. It was presumed by many that Mr. Crookes had given up the investigation, though a few who were cognisant that he had not done so, have been anxiously waiting for him to come out of his shell and make known the results of his experiments. He has at last done so, and in the "Quarterly Journal of Science" of 1st January, 1874 (of which he is editor), appears a lengthy article from his pen, in which he describes no less than thirteen classes of phenomena, which he has put to the severest tests, and satisfied himself of their reality. The various phenomena described by him took place in his own house, and were witnessed by several other persons. In fact, Mr. Crookes regards them as well established scientific facts. He was fortunate enough to secure the assistance of Katie Fox (Mrs. Jencken), and Mr. Home, and through their mediumship most of the manifestations occurred. Speaking of the raps, Mr. Crookes says:—"With a full knowledge of the numerous theories which have been started, chiefly in America, to explain these sounds, I have tested them in

every way that I could devise, until there has been no escape from the conviction that they were true objective occurrences, not produced by trickery or mechanical means." Mr. Crookes further testifies to the movement of ponderable bodies without contact. The levitation of the human form. The alteration of the weight of bodies, &c. The following extract bearing upon luminous appearances, and what he calls "phantom forms," is interesting:—"A phantom form came from a corner of the room, took an accordion in its hand, and then glided about the room playing the instrument. The form was visible to all present for many minutes, Mr. Home also being seen at the same time. Coming rather close to a lady who was sitting apart from the rest of the company, she gave a slight cry, upon which it vanished. . . . Under the strictest test conditions I have seen a solid, self-luminous body, the size and nearly the shape of a turkey's egg, float noiselessly about the room, at one time higher than any one present could reach standing on tiptoe, and then gently descend to the floor. It was visible for more than ten minutes, and before it faded away it struck the table three times with a sound like that of a hard solid body. During this time the medium was lying back, apparently insensible, in an easy chair. . . . A luminous hand came down from the upper part of the room, and after hovering near me for a few seconds, took the pencil from my hand, rapidly wrote on a sheet of paper, threw the pencil down, and then rose up over our heads, gradually fading into darkness." The following test of the "Unconscious Cerebration Theory" of Dr. Carpenter, is of considerable interest, destroying the tenability of that rather absurd notion:—"A lady was writing automatically by means of the planchette. I was trying to devise a means of proving that what she wrote was not due to 'unconscious cerebration.' The planchette, as it always does, insisted that although it was moved by the hand and arm of the lady, the intelligence was that of an invisible being who was playing on her brain as on a musical instrument, and thus moving her muscles. I therefore said to this intelligence, 'Can you see the contents of this room?' 'Yes,' wrote the planchette. 'Can you see to read this newspaper?' said I, putting my finger on a copy of the *Times*, which was on a table behind me; but without looking at it.

'Yes,' was the reply of the planchette. 'Well,' I said, 'if you can see that, write the word which is now covered by my finger, and I will believe you.' The planchette commenced to move! Slowly and with great difficulty the word 'however' was written. I turned round, and saw that the word 'however' was covered by the tip of my finger." The foregoing testimony of a scientific man of Mr. Crookes' standing should at least induce a few of his colleagues to join with him in the exploration of the rich field of spiritual science, which offers to the expanding mind an illimitable scope. Up to the present time Mr. Crookes appears to have confined himself to the objective phases of the phenomena; these are necessary as a basis, but the subjective or mental phases are decidedly the most important and elevating. We understand that he has a more comprehensive work in hand, the publication of which will be looked forward to with considerable interest; meantime, he deserves much credit for his steady pursuit of the investigation in the face of the opposition of his scientific brethren.

COMMUNICATION.

Can you say my children as Peter, James and John said "It is good for us to be here" not to build Tabernacles of Wood or Stone, but to feel the divine influence in your souls, which transfigures the mortal unto a likeness of the most holy. Yes my children we come with power into your midst when your aspirations rise to meet and greet us, it is then the cord of sympathy is tightened and we descend on the magnetic stream of love to help you in your duties. Arduous they become when your vision is be-clouded and you remain too long among the thickening cares which spring from undue anxiety about the physical tastes and appetites of the body, but when you perceive the wisdom of goodness that rests on and rules in all life the fitness of things terrestrial to those which are spiritual, and that before you can truly appreciate the higher enjoyments of life you must work for them in the school of earthly experiences by which you learn the power that lies in little things, and that a life of loving actions creates true riches that cannot be taken away (No! they give strength to the soul when the waves of tribulation assail you) not in the contemplation of having done a generous deed, but in the thought that you have done what you feel is in harmony with your highest aspirations, and thereby fulfilling the laws which binds you to the infinites, you can then exclaim, 'It is good for us to be here.' Ponder well the thoughts which arise from the contemplation of the duties of earth life, let your emotions of sympathy be guided by reason, and act well your several parts—Good night.

IMPRESSIONAL WRITING.

(Received 24th February, 1874.)

The development of humanity and the good of the race should be the great theme of your life.

Man's sympathy for man should be unbounded, and until such be the case anything like true brotherhood cannot exist. Let each one of you learn to cultivate a true feeling of sympathy and love for every one of your fellow creatures. Nothing but such a feeling can ever benefit and bless the race—even to your worst enemies; be not satisfied until you can feel more love than hate. No man can possibly love God and hate his brother, *the son of that Father* whom he professes to love and obey. The true love of God in man's heart extends his sympathies over the entire brotherhood of the race. If God is anything He is Love-Universal Love. If you are a son of that God and truly love *Him* your Father, then you must love every member of his family without any exception; and if there are any that you should love more than others, it is just those who have been less

fortunate than yourself in the birth sphere—it is just those who may have been nursed in the bosom of crime or the lap of ignorance—all these extenuating circumstances should make you more loving and kind to them than you otherwise would be; the very injuries they may inflict upon you should only provoke greater acts of kindness in return—this, my friends, is no new philosophy. Christ taught precisely the same principle 1800 years ago; but, alas, where can you look for a practical exhibition of it—not in the modern church, we regret to say. Nay! rather go to the so-called "world," the much despised "world," and you are more likely to find broader charity and Christlike love than in the church, which in the present day has become little else than an institution for fostering party strife, and selfish exclusiveness—building a heaven for a select few, while the great bulk of the family are without any remorse left out in the cold to starve and die. Notwithstanding all this, treat them kindly and with great patience, if you are members of the true brotherhood of man, you cannot do otherwise—ever remember—that no one ever could, or ever did, inherit the right of dictation to another, no matter if his superiority is as clear as the noonday sun.

If you are anxious to convince those around you of the beauty and power of Spiritualism, show them the example of a good and a consistent life. This will do more good than all the anti-orthodox lectures you can deliver. *Truth* exhibited in a life of practice—and in mere words—however *true* is vastly different. The former is tenfold more powerful for good, and indeed can be superseded by nothing in or out of heaven where-by men can be made wiser and better.

While we recognise the necessity of storing the mind with knowledge, we must not forget that "benevolent action" is the very acme of divine wisdom. *God possesses all knowledge, and the perfection of wisdom consists in His overflowing love to every living thing in the universe.* Oh that men would try to think of this grand principle more. It is rarely indeed that they render themselves God-like in this respect, they are anxious enough and ambitious enough to acquire knowledge and material wealth, *but the wisdom to properly dispose* of these, trouble them very little. Knowledge and wealth are valuable, but they lose all their value when improperly or unwisely used. Who could envy the rich man, or the learned man, who perhaps never knew what a generous sentiment meant.

My friends, live not for the acquisition of anything but truth and progress. If ye are successful you will be happy indeed, and what is more, your happiness will make others happy also, and many will thank you in the spheres above for that you did not know you had conferred. *The truly good man* blesses more than he has any conception of.

Poetry.

AN ANITDOTE FOR SUPERSTITION.

A perfect blank's the infant mind
Not yet to prejudices blind,
But soon, alas, parental kindness
Inflicts us with their mental blindness;
For what our parents hold as truth,
They on us all impress in youth,
And if we dare their faith to question
They quickly flog us to subjection.
No proof or evidence they show,
The only proof they give's a blow.
Thus we are early taught you see,
Submission to the powers that be;
And youthful minds, thus early bent,
Retain their bias permanent.
If science dare to use his senses
He must put up with consequences;
A novel truth if he should teach,
The priests denounce him when they preach
For all the orthodox agree,
That men should neither think or see,
But simply what they teach receive,

And without evidence believe.
 Each sect affirms the rest are blind
 And truth to it alone confined.
 Each teach their children they are right,
 All other faiths in darkness quite.
 'Tis thus with Christian, Jew, and heathen
 In this respect they all are even;
 And each from some strange cause or other
 Avoids discussion with another;
 While truth invites investigation,
 Which error shuns in consternation.
 Discussion makes the truth shine bright,
 But error flies before the light.
 Who loves the truth should therefore try
 Their parents faith impartially,
 As it is plain most sects are blind,
 To ease and bigotry inclined
 Distinctly ask them when they teach
 To give you proof for what they preach,
 To make it evident to you
 Their scripture, church, commission's true,
 And should the facts produced remove
 All doubt, and satisfactory prove,
 You'll be a genuine sound believer,
 And not a bigoted deceiver.

R.

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS AT SANDHURST.

DEAR HARBINGER—

The Energetic Circle (now over two years of age) held its first seance after the Christmas holidays, on the evening of Sunday, the 4th January last. There was a fair attendance of members, and a cheerful, hopeful feeling pervaded all. The lady medium, early in December, had been unable to attend through severe illness—an attack of brain fever, and twice given up by her medical attendants—but now rapidly recovering with the powerful aid of her spirit-guides; and the circle, it was only reasonable to suppose, would be as successful in the future as it had been in the past. There was, therefore, ample reason why the members should all feel happy and hopeful. After the usual preliminary exercises had been gone through, the chairman congratulated the members on their patience and perseverance, and trusted that the same spirit of love and harmony would prevail among them during the current year as had prevailed in the previous one. They were gradually, stage by stage, having unfolded to them the wonderful phenomena which had appeared at so many of the circles in England and America, and which they had all read so much about in the spiritual journals; and, if they continued on as they had hitherto done, there was no reason for supposing that they would not be as successful in time with their circle as the most successful one in any other part of the world. They were now on the high road to success, and what had been done by others in this extraordinary movement could, they all knew, with time and patience, be done by themselves. And that much, God helping them, he felt assured they were all fully determined to achieve. During prayer, at this seance, a cold air was felt by all, and the chairman reported that while all hands were joined his hand was placed on a face, the chin of which was covered with hair, while that of the medium was then clean shaved. A lady clairvoyant saw several spirit-forms, and while the medium was held by the vice-chairman, a clothed figure came out and sat for nearly a minute on the chairman's knee. This was said to be the materialised form of John Robinson. John King now controlled the medium and said—"I am come to convince all, and what I say I mean. The weather is against us to night (extremely warm), but you will soon have all I have promised you. Until the harmony is complete we cannot do what we would like to do. You shall feel my entire form in my own way." Near the close of this seance all heard a peculiar metallic tapping

on the lock of the room door. On one of the members opening it he heard the same sounds continued on the passage door about nine or ten yards distant; and on the circle again joining hands and while singing "One is kind above all others," several members, including the medium, were partly controlled. Two of the members were touched by spirit-hands, these hands pressing their heads back and front, and three of them saw a female form in white, though but indistinctly on the table. The chairman said he distinctly heard like footsteps rushing towards him, and a rustling sound as though made by a lady's dress. At the same moment, while those next him held each of his hands, he felt the pressure of two hands on his right arm quite plainly, and a figure apparently standing by him, he hearing a sound as of breathing and having that peculiar sensation which one experiences when a presence is near. Just before lighting up, the table was raised up towards a lady, and moderately loud raps were given on it by our invisible friends. On 9th January, the musical portion of the services were rendered doubly interesting by the presence, for the first time, of a lady who could accompany herself on the cabinet organ in the room. The singing has, in consequence, very much improved and the harmony increased. At this seance the controlling spirit said it was the spirit of the lady medium which had been present on the previous night, and which had been permitted to leave the body to visit us. On the 11th January, several were touched by spirit-hands while all hands were joined, and a spirit-form was seen standing near a lady member all through the seance. The chairman felt a hand with a diamond ring on the fourth finger. King showed his light to-night, which was waved about in time to the music, and was, for the first time, accompanied with the most delicious perfume smelt by all the circle. This perfume had been felt earlier when John Robinson controlled. King said—"You should look more intensely at the lights, and you would see more in them." The light as usual was covered with gauze. On the 16th January the medium was controlled by John King, who spoke, per the medium, as follows:—"Long sittings in this warm weather are not good. They weaken the power. Since my daughter has not manifested, I am not so powerful to do what I wish. There are many things yet to be done before I dare to show myself. Before you can all see my entire form, you must be in complete harmony. Much of the power we use comes from the circle more than from the medium, this circle being different from others. Your medium is more a trance than a physical medium, and consequently, before we can materialise to be seen, you must be of one mind, thinking kindly of all and acting kindly to each other. You must also keep yourselves by yourselves, and on no account allow your medium to attend other circles or be controlled by other spirits. You will have one come back shortly." King then added—"Remember my instructions. I must be going. I shall be in London in five minutes. Good night." Do the foregoing teachings and counsels look as if they came from a low, bad spirit? If so, where are we to look for the good ones? The reference to King's daughter not manifesting, was made in consequence of the continued absence of the lady medium whom she controls, who was not yet well enough to attend. At this seance all smelt the usual delicious perfume. At the next one, held on the 18th, spirit-hands touched several of the members while the mediums hands were held by the two chairmen. The spirit John Robinson said that George Abell was standing in front of the chairman and was writing something for him. He was then made to stand up and hold up his hand as high in the air as he could reach, when a neatly folded paper was put into it, which, on opening, he found contained eight lines of very small writing, and of a private nature, for his own guidance in the circle. In order to gratify several new members, our old friend Alfred Longmore tied the medium in the most extraordinary manner, and so rapidly as to astonish all. There were twenty members present. A spirit form was seen to-night close to the lady organist, and it partly controlled her. R. the lady and her brother were each touched by a cold hand which felt like a "lump of flesh." On the 23rd while all hands, including those of the

medium, were joined, the chairman's hand was taken by the entranced medium's and placed on a face covered with gauze, and the vice-chairman was touched by a spirit-hand. The medium now placed himself on the chairman's knee, and his chair was levitated on the table and then thrown on the floor without human contact. And while the medium was thus held the candlestick was thrown on the floor, the candle taken by a spirit-hand near to the ceiling, and then dropped on Mr. P.'s head. King now controlled, and Mr. M. had his hand placed upon a face covered with gauze, and a small neatly-formed hand with a ring on one of the fingers was passed through his. The chairman also felt the same, Friend R., who is slightly clairvoyant, reported being nearly controlled, and seeing a spirit-form in front of him with its head bandaged. A strange voice addressing the chairman said—"How do you do?" and shook hands with him. The chairman reminded the circle that King had told them one would come back shortly. This evidently referred to a near relative of a lady present. King said they would tell the lady medium themselves when she was to attend the circle again. On the 25th the chairman read interesting extracts from "the (London) Spiritualist," and the circle sang "Shall we gather at the river." A current of cold air was felt by all, and all smelt the most delicious perfume, King remarking that he had "scented the medium," and there was no doubt about it, as his every movement testified, the atmosphere in the vicinity of him being full of it. The chairman's hand was placed on a face covered with gauze, and a small hand like a lady's, with a ring on the small finger, was placed in his. Footsteps were heard walking along the room while the medium was seated in his chair, and several of the members were touched by spirit-hands. King asked the circle to sing "Guide me, oh Thou Great Jehovah!" and then showed his light, and while it lasted the air seemed full of the most beautiful perfume. Friend H. had his hand placed on a face with a thin beard, the vice-chairman feeling the same. Friend S. saw the form of a man near to the organist, the features being plainly seen. The figure was not very tall, with whiskers and a bushy beard. On the chairman showing him a photo afterwards he said it was, he thought, the same, but he could not be certain. Four of the members were now touched by spirit-hands, one of them being the lady organist, and a voice, per the medium, said—"I have come; sing." Friend D. here reported that a figure came and sat on his knee, while the chairman reported that the medium came past him to his seat with great rapidity and slightly convulsed. The figure on D.'s knee, and whose hand he held, seemed to his surprise to have evaporated. There was a strong impression in the circle that there had been a materialised spirit-form in the room all the sitting. King then, suddenly addressing the chairman, said—"Never mind the persons who meet in another place.

I have one or two of them I am going to convince in my own way." At the seance on the 30th the room became "pitch dark," and a current of cold air was felt by all. Friend M. saw a tall spirit-form on the table, and the candlestick was thrown violently on the floor. Whilst the medium was held by friend M. and his wife a clothed form came and sat on the chairman's knee, he feeling its hand and clothes. Friend H. and the vice-chairman also felt it. King called out—"It was me whom you felt. You felt hand, arm, and form, but you won't yet believe." The circle again noticed the extreme darkness of the room. King laughed, and raised a corner of the window blind, which showed us the moon shining brightly outside. The circle then sang "Home of the Angels," and during the singing of it, the medium being near the music-stool at the time, a figure passed Mr. H., and was pushed on the chairman's knee with such force as to nearly knock him and his chair against the partition. At the same moment another figure fell down between the two chairmen, whilst the person who had pushed or carried him there rushed back, friend H. declared, to near the music-stool. The chairman then reported that the medium was lying on the floor beside him, but to his utter astonishment friend S. announced that it was him—King—laughing, per the medium, at the other end of

the circle. S. reported that he was raised from his seat at the far end of the room and shot across the table with great force and rapidity. This strange manifestation undoubtedly proved the presence of a third person, connected with it, and one too having much power to act. King said—"The harmony is good to-night: sing some of your hymns." Whilst the circle were singing friend H. was touched on the back of the head and neck by a large spirit-hand; and whilst S. held the medium's hands five of the members felt spirit-hands. Friend M. also felt John King, who said to him—"feel John King as he is." The circle again sang, and the chairman reported that a form had again come and sat on his knee. Mr. S., who had previous to this returned to his own seat, said that the medium had been sitting all the time on his knee with both his hands in his. King then came round to the chairman and said—"Be not astonished." The circle were highly pleased with the manifestations at this seance, they being changed for the better, as King had formerly promised, and of a much more convincing character, for there was now a certainty of the presence of materialised spirit-forms among them, though not yet visible. On Sunday evening, the 1st Feb., the circle were cheered by the presence of the lady medium, for the first time since her late illness, and she received the hearty congratulations of all the members with whom she is a great favorite; also her spirit-guide, Katie King. The chairman reported seeing a figure in white near to the entranced male medium, who said—"Would you like to feel it?" And his hand was pulled up above the head of the medium as far as he could reach, and placed upon a face covered with gauze. A hand had also played with his hair and touched him on the left shoulder, the lady medium (not yet controlled) reporting these things to a friend sitting next her before the chairman informed the circle of them, thus unknown to him corroborating his word. The chairman then said he was conscious of seeing a figure moving about near his desk, the lady medium having before he spoke reported seeing this to friend H., and stating that it was a female form floating about through the room. She had long fair hair. She could also see a figure following the male medium about, and about half a yard behind him. Friend B. had a form sitting on his knee while both mediums were vouched for as being in other parts of the circle. Katie King controlled the lady medium very gently, and the circle sang her hymn—"The Lord of Heaven Confess." Sister R. felt Katie's hand with a ring on the finger, and she said the fingers were long and tapered. Katie said that attending the circle would do her medium no harm whatever. Many of the members felt spirit-hands at this seance. On the 6th February friend K. played several beautiful secular airs on the organ. The chairman reported that during prayer a hand kept playing with his hair all the time, all hands being still joined, and neither of the mediums yet controlled. The lady medium had previously reported this in a whisper to friend H. The chairman also stated that his hand was placed on the medium's face and then on another one, and he felt two long bare arms, and a ring on one of the fingers of the right hand. Friend A. R. was made to feel a face covered with gauze the same as the chairman. The vice-chairman stated that he heard a voice most distinctly near the ceiling, and, at the same moment, the male medium came down upon the shoulders of friend H. with considerable force as though he had fallen from a height, the room being at the time intensely dark. Katie King said—"My father took him up, and if you wait he will yet make him write his name on the ceiling." Friend S., while seated in the medium's chair where he had been brought across the table to, was touched by a number of hands, and a white form which Katie said was an old friend of his shook hands with him, the cold air near to her being very strong. Friend K. said that Katie allowed him to feel her hand, and gave him her ring to hold, which was so small that it would not go on her finger. At the close of this seance several operative pieces were played on the organ. On the 8th, on assembling, the lady organist with friend K. and others sang and played "I will arise," and Pope's ode—"Vital Spark," the circle joining in. The chairman, after the circle had sung "Shall we gather at the river," reported that he

felt like a figure crawling at his feet," all hands being still joined. Then the chain of hands was broken, and his hand was taken and placed upon an upturned face near to the floor, the face being deathly cold to the touch, the features all well formed, the nose prominent; then led up to the medium's own face, which was burning hot. This extraordinary manifestation was repeated twice. He was, he said, impressed that it was the face of John King, as he had seen it in "The (London) Medium." Later on he felt hands, and a figure came and sat on his knee. A Church of England hymn-book was taken out of the lap of Mrs. M. and thrown on the floor, a hand having previously touched her on the face. The lady organist was made conscious of a dark form being near to her, and was frequently touched by hands. The lady medium had previously reported seeing this form also. The lady organist was then taken from her usual seat by Katie King, per her medium, and placed beside sister M. Her hand was then taken and the hand of a corpse placed in it, which, from certain peculiarities belonging to it, she at once recognised as belonging to her late near relative. She also felt the lower portion of a face with a bushy beard, which she also recognised in consequence of a lock having been cut off it after death, and which she now felt minus the lock. This fact was entirely unknown to either the mediums or the circle. And after this wonderful manifestation had been reported by the lady to the circle, the chairman intimated that he had been made aware by Katie King that it was to happen. Katie said in a low voice to the chairman that "it was difficult to effect his return in that way sooner, but as they knew it would comfort and gratify her much, they had done it." On the next morning, the lady's brother, who is also a member of the circle, expressed a wish to her privately that he would like so much to get such a test, nothing more being said on the subject to any one. On the following Sunday night, at the circle, Katie King came up to him and said—"You expressed a wish to your sister last Monday morning to have a similar test to her. I was present and heard you; come with me," which he did, and while seated beside Mrs. M. had precisely the same hand and lower portion of a face with a beard placed in his hand which his sister had, and which he at once recognised by the same tokens, as she had done. You can judge of our friend's astonishment at all this. I may add that I have rather understated the facts than otherwise. Like a chain of delicious perfume now passed round the circle, all feeling it and being very much surprised at it. It appeared as though our invisible friends had formed a circle within our own for a few minutes. Friend D. was told by Katie King that her medium would soon be controlled by his spirit-sister, and a small hand playfully pinched his cheek and stroked the back of his hands. King, per his medium, shortly afterwards came down from a height on his head, the weight being as D. supposed about 10 stone, but King at once replied—"I was 13 stone, and I shall come down again on your head if you wish it." It is needless to add the honor was declined. King then came round to the chairman and said that "all that had been promised would be fulfilled." The circle then sang "I Will Arise," and Katie's hymn, and thus ended one of the most harmonious and successful seances ever held by the Energetic Circle, a want of space preventing me from giving many interesting details.

On the 13th, while all hands were joined, the chairman's hand was placed upon an upturned face near the floor, the skin being smooth to the touch, and the features well formed. The face felt very cold. The lady medium reported seeing this face and form before the chairman spoke. Sister P. reported seeing several forms near friend D., one of them being a female. The vice-chairman felt a face and after the medium's. John King then made his medium give friend H. and the chairman each one of his hands to hold, and during the whole time (the lady medium being beside the vice-chairman and with her two hands resting on his shoulders), one of these friends held one of his hands over the medium's legs, a hand as palpable to the touch as any human hand in the room, came first to the one and then the other, and pulled each of their ears and beards, and loudly slapped them on the top of their heads; the slaps being

heard by all the circle. This extraordinary manifestation was twice repeated and under the same test conditions. Later on, as if to remove all doubt from the minds of the circle as to its genuineness, the same manifestation was repeated to friends K. and M. and under the same conditions. Now as no one present was expecting such a manifestation, and as our mediums are perfectly unconscious when in the abnormal state, from whence came the hands and the intelligence guiding them? It must have been from an entity possessing consciousness and a will. Who and what was he; and where did he come from? are questions that will inevitably suggest themselves to all honest, inquiring minds. As for the opinion of the mere animal mind—if it has any—it is of no importance whatever. Sister W. felt a spirit hand, which Katie told her she would in time recognise as that of a dear friend. Friend S. was borne right across the table by a large arm. Katie said after her father had levitated his medium in the manner they heard, he had lifted S. in the way described. Friend H. had his hand placed on two faces near the fire-place, and hands were placed on his head and beard. King told him and the chairman that he would ere long tie his medium in a cabinet, and then come and sit on the medium's chair himself, where they would all see him. He also told the chairman there would be a change of manifestations in two or three months from that date. Katie King—per her medium—added that they were all determined there should be no more saying: "Oh, I thought I felt hands and faces, but they would take care now that they all should feel them without a doubt." On examining the numbered papers at the close, there was the following writing in four distinct hands.—"Good night, John Robinson." "We are doing much, George Abell." "John King." "We are all with you. Alfred Longmore."

Now, as the mediums were duly searched and the papers on which the foregoing writing was found, were all numbered and examined previous to the light being put out, and as every member is on his oath not to deceive, by whom was the writing done? This writing, in four different hands, was seen by all the circle, consequently it could be no delusion on my part. If only one person sees a thing, it may be justly affirmed that he may have been deceived, but if it is seen by a number of persons at the same time, then it is undoubted proof that it was seen. Are we justified, then, in concluding that this writing must have been done by an intelligent entity? And if so, as the signatures and writing are all in the English language, is it too much to suppose that they were done by persons who once were inhabitants of this lower sphere, and residents at one time or other of our own dear native lands? In such a case as this it would be nonsense to assert that our sense of sight had deceived us, for we possess the papers with the writing on them and have all seen it. On the 15th February, while the chairman was addressing the circle on the important duty they had undertaken, loud and repeated raps were made on the floor near the medium's chair, he not being yet controlled, and with the light on the table, the medium being now controlled and the light out, something like a box was held to the chairman's nose from which he smelt the most delicate of perfumes. Friend W. felt a face, and while holding the medium's two hands, other two hands very cold were placed against his. Sister P. was taken from her seat by Katie and what purported to be her deceased brother's hand was passed over her face. John King, addressing the chairman, said: "Inform the circle they must never attempt to hold the figures and grip them by the waist," the chairman adding, "or press the hands or arms." Katie made answer to this, "except when placed under the fingers thus." She now made her medium place both her hands in his, and a third hand, small, and beautifully formed passed under his. King then showed his light, which was very vivid, and accompanied with the usual very nice perfume. Katie told the circle that "it was by means of that light they would all see the spirits when materialised." Friend S. saw a young female form of about eighteen or twenty years of age, standing near to friend K. all the evening. Her features, which he saw quite plainly, resembled his closely. On the 20th a figure clothed as a man, came and sat on the

chairman's knee which he very gently felt round the waist, when one of its hands took one of his and placed it upon its face, which was large with a beard. Three of the members vouched that the male medium had not left his seat beside them during the occurrence of this extraordinary manifestation, one of the three adding that his hand had been in the medium's all the time. The lady medium was seated beside sister M. and speaking to her all through the manifestation. A very cold hand touched every member present when both mediums were held by the sitters. Friend S. was lifted from his seat by a large arm and swept across the top of the table, which he slightly felt with his toes in passing, and placed on the chairman's knees. When the circle were singing "Ye Banks and Braes," he heard near the ceiling a beautiful contralto voice singing with them. King addressing friend K. said: "You shall see my light on Sunday. It has grown from a very small size to the size you saw it; it will increase till you shall see the face, and then the whole form. Observe the light intently when it appears." While the medium was held by Messrs. K. and D. a clothed figure came again and sat on the chairman's knee. Friend H. was cured by John King direct, of a deafness in his ear. The cure has been permanent. On the 22nd the two chairmen reported that while holding the medium by the hands as high as they could reach standing, they felt some one pull him towards the ceiling, he a moment after alighting upon friend B's knee and King laughing loudly. The lady organist felt two spirit hands and the lower portion of a face, her hands being kissed by the lips of that face. This extraordinary manifestation was accompanied by slightly convulsive movements on the part of the lady medium, the same as when she gave the members locks of Katie's hair. King shewed his light, and said to the chairman: "You would like to know how that light is produced. It is taken from every one in the circle, and will increase in size as we gain power." On the 27th February, friend K. played several beautiful operatic airs on the organ, he and friend L. joining in vocally. The vice-chairman had two bare arms passed through his hands and he also felt a face. Katie King told the chairman that her medium would be absent from the two next sittings from illness. She also told sister W. she would be entranced until the next Wednesday for curative objects. That night accordingly, at 12 o'clock, she became unconscious, and remained so until Wednesday, the 4th of March, and entirely without food. She has since been better and stronger in health than she has been since she had brain fever, and will be with us again on Easter Sunday. A clothed figure came and sat on the chairman's knee while the medium was held by friend D. An interesting manifestation here took place. While Miss R. was holding the medium by one hand and friend D. his other one, a spirit-hand came up, to her, untied the string of her bonnet, and tugging until it got it off her head, threw it to the far corner of the circle. The lady medium was sitting talking to sister W. all the time this was going on. At this seance nearly all the members were privileged to feel spirit-hands under test conditions. For want of space I must pass by many interesting items; but one which took place at our seance on the 6th March, I will give you. Friend A. R. was taken by the medium, holding him by both hands, from his seat and led out into the outer apartment. When passing out, friend H. though seated on the opposite side of the circle, reported feeling a clothed figure standing in front of him, and the chairman was touched by it. From the other apartment, the controlling spirit—John King—who, per his medium, still held R. by both hands, called out to the circle to join hands, which was done. R. calling out that hands were playing with his head and face, and that two hands while thus held, came and seized him by the legs and pulled them from under him, he falling on the floor. This convincing manifestation was repeated twice. The most delicious perfume pervaded the atmosphere of the room nearly all the evening. Friends W. and M. felt naked arms, and while they felt them, the clairvoyants could see the form in front of them. The chairman had his hand placed on a cold, clammy face with small features, and which impressed him with the idea that it was that of the late sister Richards, the medium rapping

on his arm three times in approval. The chairman said, however, that the token agreed upon between them and which he had not told to anyone, had not been given, when a hand hard to the touch came up from the medium's chair while his hands were held by one of the chairman's, and passed through his other one. On the fourth finger was a ring, the token agreed upon, though not exactly in the way it came. The hand to his sense of touch was that of the deceased lady. The members of the Energetic Circle have had evidence of spirit presence and power brought home to four out of the five senses possessed by the human race, namely, seeing, hearing, touch, and smell, and it will not be very long now before they shall all be able to say that they have seen the spirits in materialised form.

Yours truly,

Sandhurst, 13th March, 1874.

THE CHAIRMAN.

A SUNDAY PICNIC.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR,—Myself and three friends, whom I will name Smith, Jones and Brown, have been talking for two years past about concentrating our forces, and going for a day upon a picnic with our families. And still that day not presenting itself when we could all harmonise on the subject, we concluded to disregard conventionalities, and make Sunday the honored day. Of course we did not arrive at this conclusion without frequent discussions of the *pros* and *cons*.

Smith said he had often taken his family for a walk on Sunday, or even a ride by train to Sandridge, St. Kilda, or Brighton; but this thing of a considerable party going to the Survey Paddock—for that was the place proposed, as our limited means would not permit us to go far—and taking with us a couple of Italian artists, with their instruments of music (a harp and a fiddle), seemed to him rather a serious matter. He feared it might be looked upon by others almost as a desecration of the day.

Jones could not see the difference in that respect between one family and five going on such an excursion; nor could he, for the life of him, tell why it desecrated the day more to tumble upon the grass, and listen to a harp and fiddle, than to sit stiffly in a church pew, and grow drowsy over a lengthy and rather dry sermon, and the music of an organ or a harmonium.

Having been brought up in the church, I confess I felt a little shocked at the familiar and flippant way in which Jones put it, and yet his logic was so forcible that I did not attempt to refute it.

Just then Brown—always held to be rather strict in his formalism—chimed in, that if the thing in itself was "good and wholesome" (those were his words) the day would in his opinion be honored, rather than dishonored; for, said he, the Master on more than one occasion intimated that it was lawful and right to do good on the Sabbath day. This happy thought of Brown's did much to satisfy the scruples which had been raised.

Mrs. Jones, however, very unexpectedly suggested that her mind had been a good deal exercised upon the subject since it was proposed. She could not say that there was anything wrong in having a pleasant and healthful outing on Sunday, but she was fearful it might be setting a bad example to the children. She wished hers to be brought up to respect the Sabbath and religion, and she endeavored always to avoid anything that might be construed into evil—"every appearance of evil," in fact.

"Very well," said Brown, "let us go, but avoid, as you say, Mrs. Jones, every appearance of evil. Let us not take anything intoxicating with us—not even sour colonial wine; and then we shall not be in danger of becoming noisy or quarrelsome. Let us be off bright and early, and home again in time for tea by our own fireside, where we can talk over the events of the day in quiet. In short, let us be temperate and moderate in our pleasure, and believe me, Mrs. Jones, we shall be setting an example to our children, and to the world, that it will be well for them to follow."

This healthy and robust sentiment was well received, and settled into our minds equal to a sermon—a golden speech, with its words fitly chosen.

Well, after sundry similar discussions, it was decided at last, as I have said, that we should honor Sunday by selecting it for our picnic. The morning looked threatening, and the children were in a great twitter lest it should rain, and cause the party to be postponed. But the sky gradually brightened, and so did the little faces about us, beaming with the pleasant anticipations, such, if I must confess it, as I have seldom witnessed in anticipation of school, even Sunday school! Promptly we joined our friends at the place of rendezvous, where we found as happy a gathering as could well be imagined. Away we sped to our destination, and while the sun's rays were still tempered by the cool sea breeze, we were rambling among trees and shrubbery native to the soil, and the children—a score or more—were fast finding out the delightful nooks, and each other's companionable qualities, while singing and dancing to the music of the foreign artists was the ruling occupation of the hours, till luncheon on a grassy knoll came as a welcome break into their romping glee. The appetites of young and old were sharp set, you may depend, but the youngsters didn't allow the grass to grow much before they were at play again. And, as the sun was slowly sloping towards the west, we gathered our tired lambs together, and wended our way to where a couple of 'buses were to meet us, and convey us to within a short distance of our several homes, which we all reached before nightfall.

Now, Mr. Editor, before closing this brief sketch of our Sunday picnic, a thought occurs to me, which will, I trust, be considered pertinent. Some may think that our Sunday would have been more appropriately spent in attending public worship. But this, it appears to me, arises from a mistaken idea of what worship is. I am not disposed to ride rough shod over the prejudices of people, resulting from errors in their early education, for I do not find *myself* entirely free from them. But to such persons I would say, come, and let us reason together. And it seems to me that worship does not consist solely or chiefly of lip praises of our divine ideal, nor of verbal aspirations for divine help. That these are good and helpful, I am willing to admit, and do firmly believe; and I believe also that they who ignore them are living below their privileges—are feeding upon husks in a foreign land; far away from their Father's house. But there is worship of another kind, which is quite as apt to be overlooked. The scribes and pharisees of old were careful to pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, but omitted the weightier matters, judgment, mercy and faith. "These," said Jesus, "ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." It is that work of sympathy with our fellow men, which, while it includes *all* without reserve or stint, *begins* with that circle which touches us, or is most easily reached from our standpoint, and thence radiates and extends on every side, until it widens to the embrace of all God's universe. This is the true charity, or life of love; and its reward is in itself. It is trite to speak of labor as worship; yet work—the fulfilment of duty—is of more importance than sacrifice, and more grateful to the Creator than the fat of rams.

And is it not certain that, as parents, we were performing an act of duty to our children, in giving them healthful recreation among cheerful associations? If, then, this is a right thing to do, how can the day upon which it is performed change its character? The public life of the Christian's great exemplar was devoted to active charities, loving deeds, and kindly instruction. The impression I get from a study of that sublimely beautiful character is, that he went about doing good, regardless of days and seasons, and that his life work was a continuous and harmonious worship of the Godlike intuitions of his nature. Whether he sat down and reasoned with the multitude upon the mountain side, or instructed fishermen as they mended their nets by the sea shore, or gathered young children around him, and blessed them with a sweet benediction, his was a loving heart that embraced all, and sympathised with the occupations and enjoyments of those around him, and therefore our hearts warm towards him as one who practised what he taught—pointed the heavenly road, and led the way. Were that divine teacher now among us, who can doubt that he would make one with us in our cheerful

gatherings, without regard to the day or the occasion? Jesus was not one to stand aloof from men. He went where they congregated, not to receive homage, but to bless. With the Pharisees it was not so. For his disregard of ordinances, they condemned him; and he would meet with as little consideration from the self-righteous Pharisees of our day. If they could not prevail upon him to observe the ordinances, they would excommunicate him; and if they could get the police with them, they would bring scandalous charges against him, and hunt him down to death as of yore.

PATER FAMILIAS.

—o— SPIRIT HAIR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR—

The subjoined extract from the (London) *Medium* of 24th October last, anent spirit-hair being brought by spirits to circles, may be of some interest to your readers, the more especially as it corroborates statements of similar phenomena which have occurred at the Energetic Circle, Sandhurst, and which have been published in recent issues of your journal, and, therefore, the more interesting to Spiritualists in this part of the world. The spirits say, at one of the circles I attend, that they can preserve the hair so brought by magnetizing it; and this is quite likely to be the chemical process of preservation, for if they can cure diseases by magnetism, may they not be able to preserve hair by it?

Yours fraternally,

26th Feb., 1874.

A CLOSE OBSERVER.

The following is the extract referred to by our correspondent:—

At the close of this seance the controlling spirit informed us that the medium's sister, who has been in spirit-land for a good many years, was very anxious to have a lock of hair belonging to her (the medium's) youngest child, and that if we would place such on the table it would at our next seance be taken away, and in its place would be left a lock of her (the spirit-sister's) hair! Of course we promised that, so far as we were concerned, the wish would be carried out, and accordingly on the 14th inst. the hair was duly laid on the table, together with some paper and a pencil. We opened the seance in the usual manner, by prayer, &c., and the medium became entranced, and while in that state spoke to us for about an hour. Suddenly, however, the controlling spirit announced that the medium's sister had now come, and we were enjoined to keep the circle unbroken and remain quiet for a few minutes. During the pause the medium breathed heavily, seemed to be in a deep sleep, and silence was only broken by her asking, "Have you got power enough? all right, thank you," and in an instant afterwards we were told the work was completed—we might light a little gas. We did so, and at once perceived that the child's hair had gone, nothing remaining but the paper upon which it was laid, and on the table lay a small, neatly-folded paper parcel, which we guessed must contain the hair from spirit-land! Seeing that the medium had been entranced during the whole of the evening, and of course had neither seen nor heard anything—at which she is often very much annoyed—we resolved that she should open the parcel herself as soon as she awoke. On returning to her normal state, the parcel was opened, and inside was a small lock of very light hair neatly twined round a gold ring, about which latter I must make a few remarks to make matters intelligible. At our sitting of the 7th inst., the Indian spirit while controlling the medium asked to see my ring. She looked at it, took it off my finger, and said she would like to keep it for a short time. I said it was all right, expecting, however, to find the ring on the table at the termination of the seance. In this I was disappointed, as it was nowhere to be found, and on informing the medium when she came out of the trance what had taken place, she became very alarmed and commenced to search her pockets and her person generally, and finally the room was searched, but to no avail. Some days passed, and still no word of the ring; the medium became almost distracted, and said if the ring were not found she could never sit again. While sitting

in the kitchen one evening talking, not thinking of a seance, the rappings came loud and furious, and on being asked if "they" had something to communicate, "Yes" was knocked out, and the following message received:—"The ring is all right; it will be returned with the lock of hair. It is in the keeping of J—R—" (my wife's brother, who has been in spirit-land for years).

From the above it will be seen that our spirit-friends have kept their promise, and with regard to the lock of hair from the medium's sister, I can only remark that it looks perfectly natural. It is of a beautiful light colour, which exactly resembles that belonging to the late sister in question. Should you desire it, I shall be very glad to let you have the hair for inspection, as also the bulrush.

"Smashed-up the so-called science!" Ha! ha! Might as well try to extract silver from pebble stones.

Apologising for encroaching so much on your space, I remain yours fraternally, JOHN IRVINE.

373, Westgate Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne, October, 1873.

[Was this hair taken from the grave, or was it materialised spirit? At Mr. Alsop's some time, ago hairs were brought to the circle that were said to be plucked from the body in the grave. The bulbous roots of the hairs adhered. This case was reported by us at the time.—Ed. M.]

CASTLEMAINE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—A treat was given to the children attending the Lyceum Sunday School on Sunday the 6th March, at Mount Alexander, the whole of the expense being defrayed by the liberality of Mr. James Shaw, one of our most prominent Spiritualists. The weather being beautifully fine and the spot so well adapted for the purpose, the youngsters had a most enjoyable day. It was the intention of the adults attending our Sunday services to hold a service in the afternoon on the Mount, G. C. Leech Esq., promising to give an address, but unfortunately he (Mr. L.) being too unwell to do so on that day, we were disappointed of the pleasure. However, we had a large gathering of friends and all, young and old, spent a most pleasant day amidst the beautiful scenery surrounding them, returning at dusk, no doubt all the happier and better for the out.

B.

AN ESSAY ON LIFE, ITS ORIGIN AND OBJECTS.

BY HENRY T. CHILD, M.D.

CHAPTER IV.

VEGETABLE LIFE.

(CONTINUED.)

On the uses of Flowerless plants to Man, and in the Economy of Nature.

Each onward step in the acquisition of knowledge has a two-fold effect, first, in presenting new truths to the explorer, and second, that which is no less important, in shedding a brighter light over that which has already been investigated, giving a clearer and more comprehensive view of former truths.

In a new country the out-posts of civilization can never be surveyed and mapped out accurately, until the hardy pioneer has pushed his explorations into the unknown land beyond.* So with our subject. Had there never been discovered any flowering plants, we should certainly not have known that there was any attempt in Nature, for displaying all those grand and gorgeous beauties which are presented in this field; but having stepped out among the beautiful flowers and feasted our vision thereon, when we return to examine the Cryptogamia, we see that nature has here presented an earnest, a prophesy, rudimental though it may be, of that which she designed to introduce as soon as conditions were pre-

pared for it. The higher ferns have their little seed vessels, and seeds modestly arranged on the under surface of their beautiful leaves; and there are other rudimental foreshadowings of flowers and fruits which are the ultimates of all flowers.

In the far off polar regions where winter holds perpetual and undisputed sway, and the earth is robed forever in the garments of snow and ice, a phenomenon occurs, which, to the ignorant inhabitant of this dreary clime, and to the hardy mariner who visits it, is often fraught with terror, and awakens feelings of superstition and dread, but which to the eye of science, affords a beautiful display of the wonder-working power of the Infinite. We allude to the phenomenon known as red snow. Under certain conditions, within a few hours, the surface of the snow for miles in extent becomes changed from a pure white to a pink color, an appearance which, with the aid of the imagination, easily suggested the idea of a shower of blood, but which, when viewed from a scientific stand-point, by the aid of a microscope, is found to be the result of a cryptogamous plant (*the Protococcus nivalis*), a small and simple cell plant, which has the power of multiplying rapidly in untold millions of cells which spread out upon the surface of the snow, absorb nourishment from it and the air, live a brief period and then perish. Other cryptogamia, of the lichen tribe, furnish food in the same regions to the reindeer, and thus enable, not only this animal, but man to live there.

In our clime the variety of these cryptogamia is much greater. The beautiful ferns that adorn our fields and forests belong to this class, and there are few scenes of wild beauty that are more grand than these. In passing over the mountains of western Virginia, in the autumn a few years since, we were struck with the gorgeous beauty of the carpet which Nature had spread out in the forest shades upon these mountain sides. Ferns from a few inches to two or three feet in height, varying in color—presenting red, orange, yellow and green with intermediate shades and tints—were spread out with a richness that far surpassed the beauty of the finest carpet that we have ever seen in the drawing rooms or parlors of wealth and luxury.

But it is in the tropics that we find the most grand display of the beauties of this portion of the vegetable world. Here huge tree-ferns thirty or forty feet in height, send up their enormous succulent trunks, and from tops spread out in beauty and symmetry their broad leaves, while from their centre shoots out a magnificent bouquet of fronds.

The older naturalists commenced the study of the animal kingdom, with the higher orders and man, and pursued it towards the more simple and less developed forms. The botanists took a similar course going from the more complex to the simple—a plan against which both Nature and Reason protest. Modern naturalists with a pertinacity equalled only in the theological world, have followed in "the footsteps of their illustrious predecessors." The result of this course of going backward, is manifested in the general opposition to what is called the "Development Theory." Men who have been pursuing a retrograde course all their lives, stemming a current that has required all their energies to overcome, cannot conceive that anything in Nature can move in any other direction. And Professor Agassiz, one of the most learned men of this or any age, finds time now to lecture against "the Development Theory." But we shall pursue a different course. Beginning with the most simple we shall proceed step by step, as Nature herself unfolds, and arrive at the most complex forms. She has dissected in the most beautiful manner the higher and more complex organizations of plants and animals, and has presented their various parts in the simple forms around us, thus inviting us to study the separate functions in her grand living laboratory, where alone they can be appreciated and understood.

The lowest plants belong to the order Algæ, or seaweeds. The sea was the mother of the first-born plant-children of earth; and although they were at first very low and imperfect, yet she has nourished and fed them and reared generation after generation, until her plants included in the great family of Algæ, present, many types higher and more perfect than those that have been

brought forth and nourished upon the land, and the naturalists have placed two of the more recent orders, the Lichens and Fungi, in the scale below these.

The first and lowest plants are only known to have existed by analogy. They were entirely too frail and perishable to leave any record; and they are, therefore, found to-day in conditions approximating to the primitive. These plants were developed in waters strongly impregnated with salts, and it has been ascertained that the solvent powers, for air and gases, is greatly diminished in such water.

The temperature of these waters caused them to hold substances in solution which are not at present found in the seas. And it is a curious and interesting fact, evidently the result of the law of affinity, that the amount of saline matters in the different oceans and seas, bear a very uniform proportion to the water—a fact of the utmost importance to the plants and animals that live in these waters.

The sea-weeds of the present time vary in size and form, from a simple microscopic cell, which sometimes combine and form large masses of gelatinous matter—and from the most delicate filaments fine as hair—to the enormous fucoids which are found floating on the ocean, a single stem of which measures from *one thousand to fifteen hundred feet in length*; and the tangled masses of which cover the surface of the ocean for miles in extent, obstructing the navigation, and furnishing homes, and food also, for vast numbers of small shell fish, aquatic insects, and infusoria. These enormous masses are made to float by means of numerous small air vessels. So extensive are these tangled beds of plants that they have arrested the motion of large ships, even when driven furiously by storms, and have thus many times saved them from impending destruction.

Most of these plants are attached by roots to rocks, to shells, and to the soil in the shallow parts of the seas; others float without any attachment; and all derive their nourishment from the water and the substances held in solution by it. The minute structure and colors of many of the smaller varieties are very beautiful; and it affords interesting and instructive employment to those who visit the sea-shore to collect and dry specimens of them. They have sufficient glutinous matter to cause them to adhere to paper, on which they may be dried, after having been washed and properly arranged. The larger kinds are of a leathery consistence, and of a dark olive brown or green color. From the ashes of several varieties of these, an article called "kelp" is obtained—a substance composed chiefly of impure carbonate of soda—from which much of the soda used in the arts is manufactured.

Certain sea-weeds are valuable fertilizers, and are used in enriching the soil. Several species have been dried and used as winter food for cattle. Some of these sea-plants were formerly used as medicines. A few are still retained for this purpose, as the *chondrus crispus*—commonly known as ceargeon, or Irish moss—which has been highly recommended in diseases of the lungs. It makes a very pleasant and nutritious kind of *blanc mange*. The *Fucus vesiculosus* was used formerly in scrofulous affections. But since the discovery of Iodine, it has been ascertained that most of the medicinal properties of the sea-weeds were owing to the presence of this substance; and as it (Iodine), is extensively prepared from sea water, the plants have fallen into disuse, though if the law of isomerism were properly understood, we should probably find many instances where the iodine from the plant would be much better adapted to the human system than that obtained from other sources.

Many of the sea-weeds are used by man as food. There is an Asiatic swallow that constructs its nest of sea weeds. These nests are considered a very great delicacy, and are sought after and eaten by the inhabitants of that country. The dulse of the Scotch, and dillesk of the Irish, are prepared from algæ. Vast numbers of animals find their feed in these wide spread families of salt and fresh water algæ—the vegetable feeders of the water—being the most numerous class that exist therein, and to these (animals) this class of plants are of the first importance.

Few and unimportant are the uses which man has

made directly of the algæ. Yet in the economy of Nature, they have performed a noble part. And although we now rank them as the lowest in the scale of vitality, the time was when they stood *alone*—the highest and the only kingdom of life! Through their influence the face of nature on this globe was changed, perhaps, more than through that of any other group or family. In those days when they were

"Monarchs of all they surveyed,"

they performed a great work in removing from the waters, the air, and the earth, elements and compounds which stood as impassable barriers to the introduction of the higher forms. First, to them was given the keys that could unlock the gates that had sealed up the germs of higher life, and permit them to walk forth into the heaven of existence. How beautifully and grandly have they walked over the globe and laid broad and deep the foundations on which the temple of LIFE has been reared. And to-day the flowerless plants of the sea and land lie at the basis of all Life, and are universally working in the great laboratory of Nature—preparing the "desert to blossom as the rose," and the waste places of the earth to become as fruitful fields and gardens.

To the eye of the philosopher the apparently insignificant phenomena of the "red snow" seems to be the outstretching of an arm of the Infinite to change the atmospheric conditions, and perhaps, to stay the pestilence that might otherwise walk abroad on the earth.* Everywhere these silent workers are incessantly laboring; and, though man may not comprehend their operations, they are doubtless essential in the great plan of creation.

There are nine orders of these flowerless plants. Next we may consider the FUNGI. This order, like the former, contains a great number and variety of plants which live in moist places, mostly in the dark, and upon decaying vegetables and animal matter. They range from a simple cell, microscopic in size, through various forms, to the immense *Bovista gigantea*, which measures nearly 2 feet in diameter. The cells of all these plants have the power of propagating the species to which they belong, and are so small that they float in the atmosphere, and so numerous are they that almost every portion, near the earth's surface, contains more or less of them, only waiting for proper conditions to be developed.

We have already alluded to the common mold, and to the Yeast plant. The Mushroom family is perhaps the most familiar and best known of the fungi. The smaller forms are many of them injurious—living, as they do, on vegetables and animals. The mildew-blight, and the rust on grain, also, are caused by the growth of these parasites. By "Parasites," we mean those which live upon and draw nourishment from living plants and animals; while Epiphytes are those which live upon these without abstracting anything *directly* from them.

The disease called "Musccardine," which is very fatal to silk-worms—sometimes destroying vast numbers of these valuable laborers—is caused by the growth of a parasitic plant. In warm damp seasons it is almost impossible to arrest the disease, which spreads rapidly among these worms.

Most animals are liable to attacks of parasitic plants—especially when in a low condition of vitality, and surrounded by impure and unhealthy influence.

Mankind are not exempt from these loathsome and disgusting parasites. Several cutaneous diseases—especially among children living in filthy and badly ventilated and dimly lighted houses, and fed upon poor diet—result from these causes. The lesson to be derived from this is greater care in regard to cleanliness, and the observance of the laws of physical health. It is a well established fact, that neither plants nor animals are liable to attacks of this character *when in a good condition of health*.

Our friend and preceptor, the late Doctor John K. Mitchell, of Philadelphia, presented a theory that mala-

* During the prevalence of plague, in several instances, *red fungi* have been observed. When the cholera prevailed in this country in 1832, many persons noticed a peculiar red mold, which attacked paste and other articles. We would here remark (parenthetically) that by adding a small quantity of powdered alum to paste, when it is first made, it may be kept for a long time without molding, and that in making scrap books this paste is much less liable to attacks of fungi.

rious diseases, and especially yellow fever, were caused by the inhalation of certain cryptogamous plants belonging to this order. The atmospheric conditions, in which this disease occurs, are such as favor the development of these fungi—i. e., moisture, and a certain degree of heat. Below a certain temperature these plants perish, and in such conditions this disease is never known. But we cannot follow this argument further; the curious reader is referred to his work *

Few of the smaller plants of this Order are used by man. The mold which is so generally distributed, even if harmless, is by no means desirable. For many years one of these plants has been in common and very general use. Long before the microscope had revealed to us that yeast was a *cryptogamous plant* of this order, almost every good house-wife in the land had been in the habit once or twice in the week (at all seasons of the year) of planting thousands, and causing millions of these little cell-plants to grow. Every "batch of dough" that was "set" to make that wholesome and universal article of food, Bread, was "a garden enclosed;" and as these little plants grew in the dough, they absorbed oxygen and gave off carbonic acid; and this gas, being uniformly diffused through the dough, caused it to become "light." After a few hours growth, unless it be arrested, an acid-fermentation ensues and the bread is "sour." Having therefore been kept at a proper temperature, to facilitate the growth of these plants, it is then placed in a heated oven, and by the process of "baking" the plants are *all killed*, the gas driven off, and "the staff of life" is thus prepared.

A considerable number of the mushroom tribe are edible; and, by many persons, are considered as very desirable articles of food. The *Agaricus campestris* is the most common. It grows in fields and waste grounds, and is also cultivated. By providing a very rich soil, these plants will grow spontaneously from seeds that are floating in the atmosphere. Many others are eaten. But as the distinction between the *edible* and *poisonous* varieties is not always very marked, we would advise persons who gather these, always to seek instruction from those who have had experience.

The *Morchella esculenta*, or Morel, is not only used for food, but also for sauces, and is quite in demand in Germany, and in other European countries. But perhaps the most popular of all these is the celebrated Truffle of the French, *Tuber cibarium*. These are found under the surface of the ground in various parts of Europe. Dogs are trained to find it by the smell, and to scratch it out of the earth. Mr. Loudon relates an instance of a *man* having possessed this power. It is used either simply boiled or stewed in a great variety of forms; but, like many other things, it owes much of its popularity to its reputation. The *Amanitus muscaria*, a fungus which grows in most European countries, is used in northern Russia for making an intoxicating beverage, while in the south of Europe it is poisonous.

The ignorant man is selfish and alone. He wraps himself in his mantle and sees no beauty either *within or without*; and too often he yields to

"Passions hosts that never brook control."

The true philosopher, on the other hand, opens his heart and sees beauty everywhere! The winds and stars are his companions. He sees *brothers* in rocks and mountains, in rivers and oceans; *sisters* in flowers and birds; kind and loving *friends* in the broad waving forest trees, and in the animals that roam abroad over the earth. Everywhere he finds a home and friends, and before him there is spread out forever a banquet that kings and princes may envy, but none can take away. Wide open before all stands the gate of Knowledge! In the distance, on the summit of a mountain, is the beautiful temple of Wisdom, with its magnificent pillars of strength, and its grand dome of beauty and love. Everywhere around us, in all the objects of Nature, are pointers and sign-boards directing to this temple, and he who stops to read these is carried as by a magic power

toward it. But the indolent and indifferent roam about, without the means of getting there.

"Let us then be *up and doing*,
With a heart for any fate,
Still *achieving*, still *pursuing*,
Learn to *labor* and to *wait*."

WORKING FOR THE TRUTH.

A LYCEUM ADDRESS.

BY A LADY.

It has been asked more than once among us here, "What is the object of the Lyceum?" And though the question has been well answered already, it will, I think, bear much and frequent reflection. My own opinion is that the Lyceum system is chiefly useful in training its members to love and to work for the truth.

I do not say that the Lyceum is intended to teach you the truth; I do not think that it is; but it certainly aims at teaching you to seek the truth, and to seek it earnestly by your own efforts, to test fearlessly all that is offered as truth by anyone, and to receive it heartily wherever it may come from, and in whatever form it may appear.

I do not know that any training can do more for you. It is a great thing to be taught, in early youth, to love truth for its own sake alone, for its own beauty, and goodness. It is a great thing to learn to have a fearless trust in truth, to know that truth, and truth alone, is unconquerably strong. It is a great thing to be practised in using your own faculties to discover truth, and to bring it to all possible tests,—for truth will stand all tests. Yes, indeed, it is a very great thing never to have been cramped and frightened in using and developing your powers of thought. Many of the older members of the Lyceum envy you younger ones this great privilege, I assure you. "With a great sum bought I this freedom, but you are free born." But this is not all, there is more to be done, outside of the Lyceum, beyond it, after it. No training, however excellent, can do more than to place within your grasp the power and the habit of searching for truth. And you have much more to do for yourselves. If you would ever be worth anything, if you would ever be of any account in the world, you must love truth, and work for it. And this is not easy. It needs courage, moral courage, to bear the taunts, the misrepresentations, and the misunderstandings, of those around you, even of those you love. It needs the vigorous hope which springs from that fearless trust in truth to bear up against the many discouragements which meet your work. The faithless coldness of some, the timid selfishness of others, and, worst of all, the treachery of your own lower nature, are constantly urging you to "Eat, drink, and be merry, whilst you may!" If you listen to these councillors, no matter how you are trained, you will never be a worker for truth. They who work for truth have, nearly always, had to suffer, as nearly all gold has to be separated from rock and sand by toilsome labour; for truth Christ was crucified; for truth John Huss was burnt alive; Galileo was imprisoned for it; and though to-day these harsher sufferings are not very likely to come upon the servants of truth, yet you will still often have to endure being contemned and despised, and you will have to make worldly success secondary to mental and spiritual progress.

Yet for all this,—with all these drawbacks, I do assure you that to work for truth is the best paid service upon earth, and the surest of reward. Work for that faithfully and with singleness of purpose, and you shall grow to be giants in power and angels in your peace of mind. What higher work can you imagine to engage the energies of the highest angels in the highest heavens?

What can you look forward to, in your own bright, growing future, as, more worthy of the toil you may expend upon it than working for truth. The great astronomer, Copernicus, threw away the old established faith that the earth was the central point of the heavenly bodies, and worked for thirty-six years to discover and prove that the sun was the centre of our system. A small truth that, perhaps you may think, to work so many years for. Nay, but you are mistaken then. It

*On the Cryptogamous Origin of Malarious and Epidemic Fevers, by J. K. Mitchell, M. D., Professor of Practical Medicine in the Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia. Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1849.

crowned his head with wisdom, it filled his heart with satisfaction, and it has led us on from one new truth in astronomy to another ever since his time.

But we are not all Copernicuses. Truly no. To every one his own gift. This one has the power of song, —a voice so sweet and strong that all will listen, no matter what it says. See to it, then, that it utters nothing to deceive, to falsify. Another has a calm, strong judgment, to test and weigh all things well. Let it not be used only to judge of the probable price of stocks, or of the chances of this or that speculation succeeding. Let it, also, be used habitually to separate the gold from the dross among the new things that are always coming into the world, true and false together. Others have the gift of eloquent words to touch and to convince the heart. May such lips be ever busy, on the side of truth, teaching, and being taught. Another has high courage and dauntless spirit. Shall they be used alone to gain him honor and renown! Rather let them be used to assail evil and to uphold truth, then, too, honor and renown will eventually come to him, but only in the train of many a higher blessing. Around others is thrown the gift of mediumship. Shall they turn from it because it does not find favor with the world? Shall they not rather—must they not—use it for truth's sake, that light may abound more and more upon the earth till the fear of death, and of the grave, and of the hereafter—not a whit more terrible than is to-day with its stern duties,—shall all be swept away from men's minds. Shall we not, must we not,—we too who are not mediums,—bear our witness to the truth that we have seen, or else be recreant, be cowards?

And what shall be our reward for working for truth, —for all the sacrifices we may be called upon to make, and all the contumely it may bring upon us? Fear not! It shall be an exceeding great reward. It is this. "The truth shall make you free." Little by little it shall make you free from all foolish fears, from darkness, from stumblings, from mistakes.

He who walks an unknown path amid the mists of the early morning, starts and trembles at terrible looking things, which are but wreaths of vapour, he fears to put his foot out boldly lest he tread upon the crumbling edge of some precipice; he is chilled and discouraged by the damp and heavy atmosphere. But when the morning sun breaks through the pall of mist, at first slowly and imperfectly, then clear, resplendent, strong, that same traveller steps forth boldly, lifts up his head cheerily, and sees his path clear before him. To-day we journey still among the mists of error, but the sun of truth is breaking through our clouds. Truth, more truth, is daily coming on the earth. Soon we may stand, in its triumphant light, free, happy, fearless, strong. But there will ever be low valleys, narrow ravines, dark caverns, which will admit the light of truth but feebly. Some men there will ever be who, like the moles and bats, persist in living in such regions of mental darkness. Let us not be among them, and let not our cowardice, our silence, or our inertness, leave any to linger there who, if they heard a clear and fearless voice calling them onward and upward, would gladly follow, though they cannot lead, to those higher grounds which the sunlight always reaches first. Let us work, then, work and strive to meet the sun of truth that is rising to meet us; let us speak out fearlessly of that which we do know.

Ho! there, you dwellers in the valley, tread on the thorny path of life without fear. We are in darkness still about many things, but we see the light coming, brighter, brighter every day. Already we see that the grave is not a horrible pit, the end of all to man; but a bridge to carry you from the dark side of the valley to the sunny side. Already we see the radiant eyes and glittering robes of those who have reached that sunny side before us. Already we see the beneficent face of God smiling on us in the sweet face of Nature, teaching us in her perfect laws, drawing us to Him, as the needle is drawn to the magnet, by the likeness of our hearts to His. Already we cry to Him, Abba, Father! Oh Thou far distant, ineffable, beloved Father, Friend and Guide, even as I deal with thy younger and weaker children, so do thou deal with me. With the same mea-

sure that I mete to others, do Thou mete out Thy good things to me. If to my brother I stint the truth Thou givest me,—if I see one thing and tell him I see another,—if for the sake of my own ease, or my success in life, I call the light Thou givest me darkness, and my brother's darkness light, then may I,—then must I—suffer from the canker of falsehood eating into my eyes, blinding me to the growing life that is coming upon the earth. Oh, may this never be! More light, Father, more Truth! And may I, and all these here, be workers for Thy truth!

MR. CHARLES H. FOSTER.

In Spiritualistic matters, the event of the past month has been the arrival here of the world-renowned medium Mr. Charles H. Foster. The public have already been made aware through the daily press of some of the doings of Mr. Foster since his arrival here, but the meagre accounts there given, though wonderful in themselves, are utterly inadequate to convey an idea of the wonderful powers exhibited through this unique medium who seems to have the peculiar power of placing himself in rapport with almost any spirit who is asked for. The following account of a *seance* with Mr. Foster at which the writer was present will give some idea of his mediumistic powers.

While in conversation with a friend one afternoon recently, he mentioned his intention to visit Mr. Foster shortly. We informed him that we were then bound for Mr. Foster's rooms, and suggested the propriety of his accompanying us forthwith. He acquiesced, and we made our way to room No. 4 at the Old White Hart, opposite the Parliament Houses. Mr. Foster was absent, but returned in a few minutes and received us in his usual bland and easy manner. After a little chat on ordinary topics Mr. Foster requested us to take a seat at the table, he seating himself at the opposite side. The table was a substantial *loo* one, forming part of the ordinary furniture of the room, its only encumbrances being an inkstand, pencils and paper. Mr. Foster took a piece of the latter, and tearing it into slips about three inches by two, handed them to our friend, whom we will call S.L., telling him to write upon them the names of any deceased friends with whom he wished to communicate, fold them up carefully, and mix them together, so that he would not himself know one from the other. S.L. wrote on three of the papers, and after folding them as directed, passed them over the table to the medium, who asked if any of the spirits written for were present, this was answered immediately by three distinct raps on the table. Mr. F. then said, now spirits, if you are present, I want you to rap out your names and answer questions for your friend. This was responded to by raps in two or three places at once. We were requested to run a pencil over a printed alphabet which laid on the table; at "W" came three sharp raps; then "I"; at "L," six raps. "William?" said Mr. F. and the spirit rapped assent. The first letter of the surname was given, when Mr. F. said, "William S—— is the name" to which S.L. assented. William S. then correctly indicated by raps which paper his name was written on. Mr. Foster, addressing S.L., said: "There is a female spirit standing just by me, who has a communication for you which she says she will write to you through me, and taking a piece of paper and pencil the following was written, with fluency, "Words cannot express how glad I am to make myself known to you, I am near you much of the time in spirit, and watch over you always. I am making much progress in the spirit life, and feel happy to be able to communicate with you. L—J—C." The name was given in full, and was from a relative of S.L.'s who had left the body only a few months since. Ah! said Mr. Foster, here is one of your friends who has a strong influence, and he will print his name on the back of my hand. Stretching out his hand towards us, Mr. F. requested us to watch it; in about one minute a slight discoloration appeared, and presently the letters G.S. each about 1½ inch long and red in color came out clearly in relief on the back of the hand. He says his name is George S——, said the medium; this was correct. While S.L. was thinking over some questions, we

wrote two names on two slips, and folding them passed them over to Mr. F. The spirits immediately announced their presence, and one of them informed Mr. Foster that he would write his own name direct. Mr. F. tore off a slip of blank paper shewed us both sides of it and made marks on it that it might be identified. Placing his left hand on the table, he took the marked paper and a pencil in his right and held it under the table. In a few seconds three raps came on the table, Mr. F. withdrew his hand from under, and handed us the piece of paper with our spirit friend's name in full written upon it from right to left. We wrote a question to the spirit, folded it, and handed it to Mr. F. He immediately answered it fully and satisfactorily. Mr. F. then said, "There is a spirit standing beside you, I.C.T. or T.C.T. It is your brother." Three loud raps on the table. In answer to a question an interesting and satisfactory reply was given through Mr. Foster. Mr. S.L. then wrote a question on a piece of paper and the medium without seeing it, answered, "It is as real as your world and much more beautiful." The question was found to be, "What is the nature of the spirit world." Several other questions, principally of personal or private interest, were asked and responded to satisfactorily. During the whole of the *seance* the raps were loud and frequent in all parts of the room, and some of them on the feet of Mr. S.L. At the conclusion, Mr. Foster asked the spirits all to rap together; the shower of raps which followed this fairly shook the table. After a little pleasant conversation with Mr. Foster, we left, with a feeling that his powers as a medium cannot be fully described, but must be seen to be appreciated at their true worth. At subsequent sittings with Mr. Foster, similar phenomena were repeated, and in addition he described to the sitters, friends whom they had long forgotten, and gave correctly the diseases or other causes of death of the spirits professing to communicate.

A NATURAL CLAIRVOYANT.

The following letters appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*; the second of them was reprinted in the *Argus* of March 4th. Mr. Bone appeals to the medical fraternity for enlightenment as to the cause of the interesting phenomena exhibited in the person of his son. They and most of the so-called scientific men, are totally in the dark on this and all kindred subjects, for the simple reason that they are wilfully blind to the numerous facts, in mesmerism and clairvoyance, which have been demonstrated by those who have given time and attention to the investigation of the subject. Natural clairvoyance as possessed by Mr. Bone's son, is rare, but a similar condition may be induced by mesmerism in many persons who in their normal condition show no evidences of clear vision. 'Tis the brain sees.' The eye is but a lens, by which external objects are reflected, the impression being conveyed by the optic nerves to the brain.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD.

SIR,—I have a little boy, 12 years of age, whose singular gifts of *touch* have lately filled our family and a few of our friends with the utmost astonishment. Some short time ago we gave a juvenile party at home, and with a view to the general amusement this little fellow allowed himself to be blindfolded, and taking a pack of cards with which they had been playing "beat my neighbor," he told them the color of each, with the exact number of spots upon it, and accurately describing the Court cards of every suit, so literally as to fill every one of us who witnessed it with perfect amazement. More than that, Sir—Of course these little people demanded to be shown all that he could do, and, taking some marbles out of the "pool" he told us with wonderful certainty the color of each one as it was placed between his fingers, and when challenged with playing a trick upon us, he confessed that such was the case, *because he could feel the color of each one.*

Well, Sir, some of the young folks relating to their parents all that they had seen my boy do was naturally the cause of his being invited to their homes that their parents might be satisfied that such a performance could

take place without collusion, the result of it being that not only was all that he had previously shown them repeated with the same undeviating accuracy, my friends as they report to me (for I was not present myself) taking advantage of every means that they could think of to trick him, but also eliciting the fact that it is in his power to tell the portrait of any person with whose features he may have any tolerable acquaintance merely touching the *carte-de-visite* almost as certainly as if he had an eye at each of his fingers' ends.

Should you deem this worthy of a space in your columns I trust that some of your scientific or medical correspondents may be able to ascribe some cause for this apparently extraordinary phenomenon.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

ROBERT BONE.

140, Pitt-street, 22nd December.

SIR,—On the 26th December last you courteously favored me by publishing a letter which I hurriedly indited to you, headed "Delicate Touch," but which I have since had reason to believe I then misnamed, as I find that my little son, the subject of that letter, is capable of describing with the utmost accuracy such things as portraits (even under glass) colored pictures, woollens, figured cotton or silk fabrics, and other articles, as glasses of all shades of color, and the petals of flowers; pointing out even the minutest spots of different hues, and of reading letters from friends to friends that none but their owners have ever seen, no matter the quality of the penmanship, or the minutest print in any English reading book, with the most complete and certain accuracy. He will also tell the time indicated upon the dials of a dozen different watches that may all be pointed to different times of the day by simply showing such objects to his fingers while he is securely blindfolded, and the objects themselves are placed beyond any possible range of vision. In my former letter, Mr. Editor, I expressed a hope that "some of your medical or scientific correspondents might be able to ascribe some cause for this apparently extraordinary phenomenon." But possibly the large number of children in this colony and in other parts of the world similarly gifted may by this time have rendered further investigation entirely unnecessary on the part of the scientific. Still, sir, as I am of opinion that there may yet remain some few of my fellow-citizens quite as ignorant as I formerly was myself, I trust you will enable me to enlighten such of them in regard to this strange freak of nature by inserting this in some corner of your valuable paper. I may add, sir, in conclusion, that very many friends and acquaintances of my own have frequently witnessed, and will fully corroborate all, and even more, than I here most solemnly and truthfully avow.

ROBERT BONE.

140, Pitt-street, Sydney, 27th February.

INCIDENTS OF IMPRESSION MEDIUMSHIP

One of the forms of mediumship the least understood and the laws of which are most difficult to investigate, is that of impression mediumship. Yet we unhesitatingly believe that there is none more fraught with usefulness to mankind, none more calculated to connect the medium with the higher grades of departed spirits. It is, we think, not at all improbable that when we more fully understand the different varieties of mediumship, we shall find that which we all habitually call *genius* to, be more closely allied to impression mediumship than we can at present prove, however much we may suspect the relationship. It is quite certain, that the history of most men of transcendent genius bear traces of many peculiarities that are hardly to be accounted for without some reference to an inspiration apart from and independent of themselves. Setting aside, however for the time, the sons of genius, it may not be uninteresting to our readers to give them the following incidents of impression mediumship the accuracy of which we can personally vouch for and both of which answer for themselves the *cui bono* question so often thrown at Spiritualists.

There, lived some years ago, in a city which it is quite unnecessary to name, a gentleman possessed of

most rare mediumistic powers; not, however, a professional medium, but a clergyman. He had all his life been conscious of a strange internal power that impelled, but mark you never compelled him,—to do things that his natural *mauvais honte* made him shrink from. And by the time he had reached middle age, experience had taught him—however unusual the course of action to which he was prompted might be,—that he generally found himself well satisfied with the result when he yielded to the impulse, and very much the reverse when he resisted it.

At the time of our opening narrative, circumstances had but recently led him to investigate the phenomena of Spiritualism. But being quite unaware of possessing any mediumistic powers himself, he usually sought the aid of some well reputed medium. He had called on such a one for the purpose of requesting a seance, and was waiting the return home of the medium, when a lady, past her first youth, but handsome and dignified even to stateliness, was shown into the waiting room, and expressed great disappointment at finding that she would have to wait some time before she could have an interview with the medium from whom she hoped to obtain some important information.

"Madam," said our timid clergyman, feeling utterly astonished at himself with every word that came out of his mouth; if you will take that seat opposite me, I think I can give you the information you seek."

The lady turned and stared at him in a very lady-like and overwhelming way, but seeing a gentleman though a bashful one, and withal a quiet and reverend man she softened, took the seat he pointed to and answered:

"If you can, sir, I shall be indeed grateful to you. I am obliged to leave the city with my husband by a train which starts at such an hour that I cannot possibly await the return of Mr F—whom I came to see. But are you a medium?"

"Not that I know of, madam. But I have a message to give you which I dare not withhold.

"From whom may I ask?" said the lady stiffening again.

"I do not know;" replied the now desperate clergyman, "but if there is any mistake, as to the message being intended for you, the statements with which I have to accompany it will show that at once, and you can stop me. You are about to embark on a new mode of life, and you seek beforehand some assurance, outside of your own judgment and reason that your undertaking will result according to your wishes. Madam, listen to your head, rather than to your heart, it is much the best of the two. I will have no concealment with you," he exclaimed, habitual reserve now thoroughly overcome by earnestness. "The truth, as it is given to me, is this. You live at S—in wealth and good position, you have a good husband and a large family of children around you, yet you are actually contemplating, soon after your return home, leaving husband, children and position with a man whose sole recommendation is a graceful exterior and polished manners. Do it at your peril, and you will live to drag yourself through the streets of this very town in rags and shame, and to end your days in crime. Go home, madam, go home, and give it all up at once and forever. Your secret is safe with me, and with those who have just imparted it to me. Never let any one know, not even the scoundrel who has so nearly seduced you, how close to ruin you have been. If your husband has become distasteful to you, turn your affections upon your children, and upon the work that lies so abundantly around you. If you do not follow this advice there is nothing but ruin and a horrible death before you."

The gentleman paused dismayed at what he had done. The message was given; the inspiration was over; and he returned into himself again, wondering how he had dared deliver it. The lady rose from her seat pale, but very quiet and very humble.

"Thank you sir, I will obey you," and with that she left him; but not long after she obtained his name and address, how, he never knew; he was quite ignorant of hers till she sent it to him telling him that he had saved her, and asking for advice on some less momentous question. But he had no more messages to give her, and as a matter of personal taste, avoided her as he would have done a serpent, though she sought his acquaintance more than once.

Some years afterwards, when he had learned to understand and trust more fully the nature of his own intercourse with spirits, he met once in casual intercourse at a mutual acquaintance, the lady from whom we have the following narrative. The acquaintance did not continue beyond the first evening, and the lady had almost forgotten even his name, when some weeks afterwards she was told by her servant on returning home that the Rev. Mr. — was waiting in the drawing room to see her. She recalled the occasion of their previous meeting; but instead of availing himself of that as an excuse for his visit, he broke entirely away from it, simply reminding her of what she had heard in regard to his impression mediumship, and then stating that not long after first meeting her, he had been impelled to visit her, and deliver a message from some of her guardians, who had given him exactly and correctly her address. He had passed her door several times, so strong was the impelling force, but fear of seeming to intrude upon her had always restrained him. At last he had overcome personal feeling, in the desire to be of use to others.

The lady was an experienced Spiritualist, and therefore, though surprised, she begged him to give the message, whatever it might be, promising to exercise her own judgment in receiving it. It was in brief this; he stated very fully and particularly certain difficulties in her position, which at the time were troubling her very much. She was, he said, beset with the manœuvres of two sets of acquaintances, one party friendly in intention, seeking to engage her in marriage with a rich elderly man, not very likely to prove her affinity; the other party decidedly inimical to her, were seeking to attach unpleasant and injurious gossip to her name. In seeking to avoid Scylla, she had very nearly made up her mind to run upon Charybdis, and to seek refuge from gossip and misconstruction in a marriage of mere worldly prudence. The message came to warn her of the utter futility of any such course. Sooner, it was said, than any such marriage should take place, that gentlemen would be removed by death. The annoyance caused by her enemies, need not disturb her; with their worst will they were powerless to hurt her, and would soon disappear from her life altogether, like a bad dream. Both predictions proved true. A sudden and not to be foreseen death did remove the gentleman chosen for her husband, within six weeks after her interview with the impression medium, and her enemies who had chiefly sought this rich man's wealth for themselves ceased from troubling her. As she received the clergyman's, or rather the spirit's message calmly, reasonably, and quietly, the interview was somewhat prolonged and they parted with a mutual sense of gratification, he evidently, with the sense of duty fulfilled, she with the renewed assurance of spirit guardianship over all the haps and mishaps of life. Many other messages were given besides the one he had been expressly sent to deliver; some referring to her own past and future life, much of which has since been verified, others referring to the state of spirits after death so far as known to the communicators. She always spoke of it as an ever memorable interview from which she had derived great comfort and strength, but neither he nor she ever sought to extend the acquaintance. We know that these were not the only instances in which this remarkably endowed man used his singular gifts for good, to warn, to comfort, or to sustain, and we know of no single case in which his mission seemed to fail. Let all go and do like him, with his singleness of purpose and simplicity of soul, and the highest forms of mediumship will be far more common among us than they are now, and spiritual communication will be fully recognised as a boon and a blessing to mankind.

VISCOUNT AMBERLEY ON SPIRITUALISM.

IN the January number of the *Fortnightly Review* appears a smartly-written paper from the pen of Viscount Amberley antagonistic to Spiritualism. We have little fault to find with this lucubration. It betrays no stronger evidences of overweening self-conceit than are customarily exhibited in magazine and newspaper articles on this difficult subject, and at the stage of investigation the writer had reached he could hardly have penned a different style of composition. He had attended a few *seances* and visited a few mediums—among the rest the celebrated one who is now in Melbourne—and having obtained only negative results, naturally jumped to the conclusion that nothing else is to be discovered. Like thousands of others have done before him he regards his line of march as the *ultima thule* of possible exploration. Further experience will bring increased knowledge, and, as a consequence, increased diffidence. With all his rashness, however, Lord Amberley, unlike some Melbourne wisacres, is not so inconceivably foolish as to announce that there is a mystery, but that it would be unwise to attempt to unravel it. Moreover he is, at least, logical in his unbelief. *The Argus* has quoted one paragraph from his article. For the benefit of our orthodox opponents we will quote another, from which, doubtless, they will derive much comfort.

"It is hard to understand—or would be hard were not flagrant incongruities so common—how the same individuals can reject with scorn the statements of Spiritualists, yet receive with faith the equally incredible statements which form part of their religious creed. Evidence offered by many witnesses, whose names are known, who have positively seen what they describe, who may be personally questioned, whose untruths, if any, may be detected, they do not even deem worthy of examination. Evidence offered by single witnesses, whose names are unknown, or doubtful, who are beyond the reach of all enquiry, whose untruths, if any, there are no means of detecting, they believe even without examination. To assert that a lady floats in the air is ridiculous; to assert that a man walked on the water is quite credible. To believe that spirits return to us is a sign of folly; to believe that after actual death human beings were restored to life is rational religion. Angels might descend to converse with prophets; spirits cannot descend to converse with their dearest friends. That a table should be moved in some inexplicable way is not to be believed; that a sea or a river should be cleft in twain is not to be doubted. It might almost be maintained that the readiness with which the public accepts the marvellous and the inexplicable, varies directly as it is ill-attested. For not only is the testimony offered by Spiritualists immeasurably stronger both in kind and in amount, than that on which the orthodox miracles repose, but it conforms far more closely to scientific conditions, being offered in order to prove, not exceptional prodigies, wrought by exceptional men, in opposition to the laws of nature, but phenomena of every day occurrence, subject to their own laws, which, if not fully ascertained are no less constant than those of the material world. The churchman says, 'extraordinary events happened once, under conditions that will never recur.' The Spiritualist says, 'extraordinary events happen daily, under certain conditions, and will always happen when these conditions are fulfilled.' Any argument, then, that is used against the latter, tells with hundredfold force against the former."

The man who can write thus is too sagacious to rest satisfied, for long, with negative results.

THE HARBINGER.

DEAR SIR—With your permission I wish to bring before the Spiritualists of Victoria a matter which I am sure the knowledge of, will quickly stimulate to practical sympathy in the form of that aid and interest which this communication is intended to solicit.

It was with much regret that I was a few days ago informed that your paper was published monthly at a considerable personal loss to yourself.

Turning this over in my mind I began to wonder if such a fact could be anything like generally known to the friends of truth and progress throughout the colony. Thinking on the side of charity, viz., that they only wanted to know in order to afford the aid required, and knowing your own modesty in such matters, I resolved to make the fact known in this way, and call upon all who take an interest in our cause to lend a helping hand and relieve you of a pecuniary loss which has been borne in silence ever since the little advocate of our philosophy was inaugurated.

I have no wish to blame any one for allowing this to

go on without endeavoring to give their aid, because the presumption is, most people are ignorant that such a state of things exists, and my object in asking the insertion of this letter is to afford the light, that no doubt will promptly excite the sympathy required.

It is every one's own business to decide in which way the aid will be given, but I would suggest that all who are able will in future increase their subscription and go in for two or more copies as the case may be; were only fifty or sixty to respond it would go a long way to effect the object in view, and really the effort is so small that no one would feel it.

My circumstances are comparatively humble, and I cannot at present afford a further call upon my means. My subscription, as you know, is for five copies, and were only a few more to subscribe for the same number the difficulty would soon be removed. I have no hesitation in saying that the manifestation of a little individual interest in the subject would, before many months elapse, place your paper in an independent position.

Now, Sir, I have said enough—more, I fear, than you care to insert; but I have faith enough in the good judgment and glorious sentiments of the friends of the cause to believe that this short appeal will receive at their hands no tardy response. Considering your many gratuitous labors in connection with this publication it is surely a small matter that we should relieve you of any anxiety in the direction named.

Yours, &c.,

22nd March, 1874.

H. A.

[After serious consideration we have decided to insert the above letter. We are adverse to asking pecuniary aid, and intend to keep up the issue of the *Harbinger* while we have the means to do so until it becomes self-supporting. We believe, however, that many friends might add to our subscription list by bringing the *Harbinger* under the notice of their acquaintances, and thereby relieve us from the incubus of a deficit which presses rather heavily upon us just now.—Ed. H. or L.]

THE SPIRITUALISTIC AND FREETHOUGHT PROPAGANDIST SOCIETY SOIREE.

The Spiritualistic and Freethought Propagandist Society held their first anniversary soiree at the Turn Verein Hall on Thursday evening last. Upwards of 150 sat down to tea, the tables for which were most tastefully arranged, supplied with a great variety of good things and adorned with an abundance of flowers. After tea, the numbers were largely increased, and it was calculated that at 10 o'clock between 300 and 400 were present. Tea was followed by a concert of a varied nature, and the whole concluded with a ball, the dancing being kept up with spirit until 2 a.m., when the company dispersed.

TRUE MARRIAGE.

"Whenever man pays a reverence to woman, whenever man finds a woman purifying, chastening, abashing, strengthening him against temptation, shielding him from evil, ministering to his self-respect, medicining his weariness, peopling his solitude, winning him from sordid prizes, enlivening his monotonous days with mirth, or fancy, or wit, flashing heaven upon his earth and halowing it for a spiritual fertility, there is the element of true marriage. Whenever woman pays reverence to a man, rejoicing in his strength, and feeling it to be God's agent, confirming her purpose and crowning her power; whenever he reveals himself to her, just, inflexible, yet tolerant, merciful, tender and true, his feet on the earth, his head among the stars, helping her to hold her soul steadfast to the right, this is the essence of marriage. There is neither dependence or independence, but interdependence. Years cannot weaken its bonds, distance can not sunder them, it is a love which vanquishes the grave and transfigures death itself into life."—*Gail Hamilton*.

Advertisements.

BIRTH.

At Hargreaves Street, Sandhurst, on the night of the 22nd March, the wife of James S. Miller, of a daughter. The parents being members of the Energetic Circle, the child is to be called Katie King.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF PROGRESSIVE SPIRITUALISTS.

A SOIREE DANSANTE,

Under the auspices of the above Association, will be held at the Masonic Hall, Lonsdale Street, on Tuesday evening, April 21st, 1874.

PROGRAMME OF ENTERTAINMENT:

Overture ... Semiramide ... Miss Rosenwax
Song... .. Miss Powell
Aria ... Ingomar ... Miss Evans
Song, ... "The old arm-chair" ... Mr. Clay
Ballad, "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls" ... Miss Blackham
Solo Pianoforte ... Marche Slavonic ... Miss Mundy
Irish melody "O steer my bark to Erin's isle" Miss Hood
Spirit Song ... "From the other side" ... Mrs. Syme
Scotch Song ... "Come under my plaidie" ... Mrs. Allen
Duet ... "Elfin Echoes" ... Miss Powell and Mr. Clay
Romance ... "The Gay Cavalier" ... Miss Hayward
Song Mr. W. Powell
Scotch Ballad... "Last May a braw wo'er" ... Mrs. Allen
Song ... "Come in and shut the door" ... Miss Hayward

Tea on tables at 6 o'clock, Concert to commence at half-past 7. Dancing to commence at 9 and terminate at 12 o'clock. Tickets, 2/6, for Lady or Gentleman.

Profits, if any, to be placed to the credit of the Association's Building Fund.

G. A. STOW, Secretary.

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"Human Nature," (monthly). 10d., 9s.
"London Spiritualist" (Weekly). 6d., 21s.
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Spirit Mediums and Conjurors: an Oration delivered in the Cavendish Rooms, London, June 15th, 1873; by Geo. Sexton, M.A., L.L.D., F.A.S., F.Z.S., &c. Price 3d.
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[TELEGRAM.]

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PROGRAMME:

Introductory Voluntary. Hymn, "Ministering Spirits."

Reading.

Duett, (Soprano and Tenor) "The Great Creator's praise."

Anthem, "In Jewry is God known."

Reading.

Contralto Solo, "Golden Glory."

Tenor Solo, "Awake Lute and Harp."

Lecture.

Soprano Solo, "Consider the Lillies of the field."

Anthem, "Before Jehovah's awful throne."

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